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likes to enliven the representations of his doctrines through poetical figures which he himself characterized as *μυθολοι*: of especial importance are the myths in the *Timæus* concerning the formation of the world by the divine demiurgos, the myths of the *Phædrus* concerning the preëxistence of the soul and its free choice in this previous state, and the myths of the *Republic* which have reference to the immortality of the soul—God, freedom and immortality, are thus always the chief themes for Plato as for Kant" (p. 150). Again, "Paulsen always refers to the fact that Kant restores the ideas of God, freedom and immortality, whose theoretical proof as given by dogmatism he had rejected, by making them necessary postulates of ethics. . . . But in many places Kant introduces a peculiar reservation which does not appear in Paulsen's exposition. We must, Kant says, regard the matter 'as if' it were so; we must recognize the mere 'analogy' in the case. . . . What Kant brings forward with his favorite formula 'as if' how strongly it reminds us in many respects of the Platonic *μυθολοι*" (p. 154). "The critical element in Plato shows itself especially in the fact that he recognizes that with regard to the last and highest problems only metaphors remain to us, or as Kant says analogies. This view Kant held not less strongly than Plato" (pp. 156, 157).

This is not the place for an extended criticism of these views, and indeed one must acknowledge the force and truth in many respects of the parallel which this distinguished Kant scholar has drawn. And yet it does not seem to me that it adequately represents Kant's attitude towards metaphysics 'with which it was his fate to have fallen in love.' Great as was his care to deny that the Ideas of Reason could be *theoretically* proved, he never, it seems to me, had the slightest doubt of their objective reality. His doubt seems always to have reference to the nature of theoretical cognition, and to leave the certainty of the object untouched. Though on the theoretical plane we can only point to analogies which fall short of certainty, the practical reason furnishes a certainty which is not based on metaphors, or in any way dependent on the imagination of the individual.

J. E. CREIGHTON.

*Interpretations of Poetry and Religion.* By GEORGE SANTAYANA. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900.—pp. x, 290.

The preface to this little volume will hardly be reassuring either to the general reader, for whom it seems largely intended, or to the philosophical student. We are informed that the ten essays of which

the book is composed, written at various times and already partially printed, are here presented together in a revised form in order to develop a single idea. "This idea," we are told, "is that religion and poetry are identical in essence, and differ merely in the way in which they are attached to practical affairs. Poetry is called religion when it intervenes in life, and religion, when it merely supervenes upon life, is seen to be nothing but poetry." The conclusion is not far to seek. The author himself says: "It would naturally follow from this conception that religious doctrines would do well to withdraw their pretension to be dealing with matters of fact." And he adds: "This theory can hardly hope for much commendation either from the apologists of theology or from its critics. The mass of mankind is divided into two classes, the Sancho Panzas who have a sense for reality, but no ideals, and the Don Quixotes with a sense for ideals, but mad."

The merely orthodox reader will at once conclude, altogether too hastily, that what follows can only be an attack upon religion itself, while the more hardened philosophical or theological reader will refuse to be shocked, or even much interested, until he learns what the author means by 'poetry,' 'religion,' and 'matters of fact.' Indeed, as might be expected, this is one of the many cases in which a given thesis loses much of its paradoxical character, when the terms used are found to be understood in a somewhat special sense. But even so, there are difficulties, evident enough from the start, which are by no means removed by the author's later explanations and arguments. With all due respect to the many who accept Matthew Arnold's too convenient formula, poetry, or at least what we nearly all agree in regarding as such, is by no means necessarily a 'criticism of life,' and oftentimes such a designation must be regarded as grotesquely inappropriate. It may even be doubted whether the legitimate subject-matter of poetry is not almost as various as that of literary prose, though not of course usually identical with the latter. But if religion is to be assimilated to poetry, poetry must be understood in a sense much more restricted than even that suggested by Matthew Arnold's formula. It must not merely be a 'criticism of life,' but must embody ultimate ideals, supposed to be of nothing less than supreme worth. Moreover, religion itself, whether or not it be supposed to depend upon particular historical facts, must, *qua* religion, claim an objectivity which is not sufficiently provided for in the author's formula. In other words, religion, even in its least dogmatic forms, must always be, not merely a sentiment or a form of poetic appreciation, however exalted, but a faith.

But one would greatly mistake Dr. Santayana's attitude, if one should suppose that he was concerned to maintain a merely positivistic attitude toward religion. His æsthetic sympathies, at any rate, are not only with the traditions of the church, but with Catholicism. And he not infrequently appears to admit the importance of dogma in religion in a way that is hardly consistent with his principal thesis. For example, he says of the connection of Christianity with Judaism: "That connection . . . gave Christianity a foothold in history, a definite dogmatic nucleus, which it was a true instinct in the church never to abandon" (p. 82). Later he adds: "Now, the great characteristic of Christianity, inherited from Judaism, was that its scheme was historical. Not existences but events were the subject of its primary interest" (p. 90). And finally: "The origin of Christian dogma lay in historic facts and in doctrines literally meant by their authors" (p. 107). All this, to be sure, is in the essay on "The Poetry of Christian Dogma," and in a context which perhaps has not been sufficiently indicated; but such passages would seem to imply, what surely must be admitted by everyone, that the faith which is essential in all religions must, for the believer himself, be something very different from mere poetic appreciation or even moral approbation. In such discussions, one must be particularly careful not to rest content with a purely external view of religion, which it would be almost impossible for the believer himself even to understand.

But while, to the present writer, the main thesis of the book seems by no means to be satisfactorily proved, the essays, taken by themselves, are nearly always interesting, and often highly suggestive. The tone of the author is uniformly quiet and thoughtful, and his sympathies are much wider than might at first appear. In truth, the book is about as far as possible from being a flippant attempt to vindicate a paradoxical thesis. Moreover, there is a genuine literary quality in the style which makes the essays something very different from what they would otherwise be; for, as the author himself happily remarks: "Expression is a misleading term which suggests that something previously known is rendered or imitated; whereas the expression is itself an original fact, the values of which are then referred to the thing expressed, much as the honours of a Chinese mandarin are attributed retroactively to his parents" (p. 264).

Two of the essays, by no means the least interesting or important, might at first appear to have a rather loose connection with the rest of the book. These are on "The Poetry of Barbarism" and "Emerson." The latter essay does not, perhaps, call for special remark,

though it would be difficult to mention a saner estimate of the 'Transcendentalist' poet-philosopher. Those who still persist in finding a more or less definite nucleus of philosophic doctrine in Emerson's writings would do well to read this essay with some care. Yet the author, to whom 'disorganization,' whether in the intellectual or in the æsthetic sphere, is most repellent, brings out with singular felicity the aspects of Emerson's thought which appear to have a permanent significance, and does not, as one might have expected, emphasize too strongly which was merely the most striking expression of that rather juvenile ferment of thought misnamed 'Transcendentalism.'

The essay on "The Poetry of Barbarism" is a good deal less of an appreciation and correspondingly more of an adverse criticism. The conventional admirer of Browning will be rather startled to find that poet bracketed with Walt Whitman as one of the two typical exponents of 'barbarism' in modern poetry; but, while Dr. Santayana can by no means be said to maintain the judicial attitude in this elaborate and, on the whole, much too severe criticism, it must be conceded that he finds a good deal to say in support of his own position. In truth, of late there has been altogether too much praise accorded to that quality in certain modern, and some very recent, writers, which is somewhat vaguely termed 'virility.' One purpose of this rather eccentric, but at the same time really suggestive, chapter appears to be to show, in a way that even the most ardent admirers of this contemporary tendency cannot wholly fail to understand, that neither vehement passion nor mere obstinate persistence in the pursuit of arbitrarily chosen ends is an adequate test of strength or worth in human character, and that the expression of such untutored feelings and volitions is not necessarily the highest province of literature. So far, at least, one can most heartily agree with Dr. Santayana, who has a very just appreciation of that essential sanity which is as necessary in the realm of art as in that of discursive thought. Moreover, if, as already indicated, the author's criticism of the greatest Victorian poet is extremely one-sided, it is also very penetrating, as far as it goes. If the literary canonization of Browning were really imminent, as some of his less discriminating admirers would still appear to imagine, a critic like Dr. Santayana would prove himself only too effective a devil's advocate.

A few sentences from the final paragraph of this chapter may, perhaps, properly be quoted by way of conclusion, since they conveniently indicate the author's own standpoint. "In every imaginative sphere the nineteenth century has been an era of chaos, as it has been

an era of order and growing organization in the spheres of science and of industry. . . . Perhaps fate intends that we should have, in our imaginative decadence, the consolation of fancying that we are still progressing, and that the disintegration of religion and the arts is bringing us nearer to the protoplasm of sensation and passion. . . . If once, however, this imaginative weakness could be overcome, and a form found for the crude matter of experience, men might look back from the height of a new religion and a new poetry upon the present troubles of the spirit ; and perhaps even these things might then be pleasant to remember'' (pp. 215, 216).

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